

# THE GULL



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOL. 88 NO. 9 NOVEMBER 2003

FOUNDED 1917

## San Francisco Children Become Birds for a Day

A few months ago, flocks of rather odd-looking birds lined the stage of the Randall Museum in San Francisco, as fourth-graders from San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) schools became American Robins, Rock Doves, Steller's Jays, Black Phoebe, Northern Mockingbirds and California Quail—all competing for the Bald Eagle Trophy at the San Francisco Nature Education 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bird Calling Contest.

San Francisco Nature Education was founded to offer inner city children an opportunity to experience the excitement and wonder of interacting with nature. The program targets third- and fourth-grade classes, providing information about wildlife in an urban setting, field trips to observe wildlife and nature in the parks and open spaces of San Francisco. Fourth-graders are invited to participate in an extended study of natural history and wildlife.

Each year, at the conclusion of the one year course of wildlife study, mentored by Piedmont High School world famous bird callers, San Francisco students choose local birds to study—learning calls, making costumes and writing scripts with cool facts about their birds.

Judges, including Allan Ridley and Alan Hopkins from GGAS, had a difficult time choosing the winners this year, but in the end, three California Quail from Sunnyside Elementary School (also known as Jessica, Ivy and Maggie) hopped away with the First Place trophy.

The Bird Calling Contest is just one example of the activities designed by San Francisco Nature Education to make nature and wildlife study come alive for future stewards and conservationists.



Scott Norton

California Quail 4<sup>th</sup> graders from Sunnyside Elementary School win this year's Bird Calling Contest. Nancy DeStefanis and teacher Ms. Geran applaud the winners.

## Threat to Birds in Aquatic Park

The late afternoon sun creates a soft glow on Berkeley's Aquatic Park. A thousand ducks and grebes float quietly on the water. An idyllic scene until crew boats arrive and begin their afternoon practice runs down the narrow lagoon—and the birds fly away.

It's a beautiful sight to see the birds take flight and fly away over the freeway to the Bay. But sadly, it's not so pretty for the birds.

Scientific reports document the impacts of boating on birds: Even small kayaks and skulls can disturb water birds and may permanently deprive them of habitat if boating is too frequent. Life is very hard for wildlife, especially for migrating water birds. The energy demands of migration can be up to 15 times greater than for birds at rest, and energy demands for reproduction and breeding exceed 200 percent of resting. A migrating bird may lose up to 70 percent of its

AQUATIC PARK, continued on page 4

## It's Restore-A-Thon Time!

Saturday November 15, 9 am to 1 pm

Join GGAS and our partners—San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department, the Presidio Trust and the San Francisco Zoo—for the first ever Quail Restore-A-Thon.

See page 11 for information and a registration form.

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society membership is \$20 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. Monthly meeting: second Friday in the West Bay; third Thursday in the East Bay, 7:00 p.m.

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# Some Propose Bigger Chapter Voice in National Organization

**G**olden Gate Audubon Society, founded in 1917, has been a chapter of the National Audubon Society (NAS) for more than half a century. As such, we share many members—NAS members in San Francisco and the East Bay automatically become GGAS members and receive *The Gull*—and we work towards the common goals of protecting birds and other wildlife and their habitats.

Perhaps most importantly, GGAS, like other Audubon chapters across the nation, serves as a critical grassroots force for important wildlife conservation issues in the Bay Area. For years, GGAS members have made their voices heard in support of common "Audubon" objectives—from local issues, such as the creation of East Shore State Park or the restoration of Yosemite Slough, to critical national issues, such the restoration of the Klamath Basin.

GGAS and NAS have worked closely on many important Bay Area issues, from wetlands protection to joint Bird-a-thons. In fact, GGAS was central to the conception and establishment of NAS' San Francisco Bay Restoration office, and we work closely with NAS staff in San Francisco on protecting and restoring the Bay.

Some of you may be aware of a movement among some Audubon chapters called "Take Back Audubon" (TBA). TBA supporters believe that chapters—the very grassroots of the Audubon family—do not have a large enough voice in shaping the direction of our national organization. TBA's stated mission is to "restore a true partnership between the independent Chapters and the National Audubon Society through a real voice in the NAS organization and in all decisions that affect Chapters."

TBA has initiated a proxy campaign in an attempt to elect nine TBA-selected candidates to the NAS Board this year. These candidates will run against NAS' Board candidates, who will be announced in a direct mailing to NAS members this month. TBA has also proposed five resolutions for NAS Board consideration on December 6 that address issues of communication, partnership, Board reform, grassroots empowerment, and the dues share. TBA is seeking proxy votes from NAS members that can be cast in support of the TBA candidates and resolutions.

The Board of GGAS has discussed the TBA issue in the context of our own relationship with National Audubon Society and has taken no position on TBA at this time. Importantly, the NAS Board has convened a special committee to respond to many of the concerns that TBA and other Audubon chapters have raised, and the GGAS Board is anxious to hear this committee's proposals for partnership. The GGAS Board takes no position on the TBA proxy request and has not reviewed its candidates or resolutions. The GGAS Board makes no recommendations on any specific action regarding TBA. Nonetheless, our Board believes that it is important that you, as members of GGAS, be aware of the issues that have been raised within the Audubon family.

GGAS' leadership wants to ensure that chapters maintain a strong role in shaping the mission and work of NAS, and we want GGAS to continue to build mutually beneficial partnerships with NAS. We value our long-standing relationship with National Audubon Society and believe we can continue to work together effectively to accomplish our mutually shared goals—the long-term protection of wildlife and wild places.

by Elizabeth Murdock  
 Executive Director

*If you would like to learn more about Take Back Audubon, please visit their website at [www.smbas.org/tba](http://www.smbas.org/tba). For information about how NAS is collaborating with chapters and on the NAS Board nominees, visit [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org). For additional information on GGAS' work with NAS, please visit our website at [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org) or contact me directly.*

# GGAS Efforts Continue at Alameda Wildlife Refuge

**I**n February 2003, GGAS' Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR) Committee Chair Leora Feecey and Conservation Director Arthur Feinstein traveled to Washington, D.C. to urge U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) officials and the U. S. Navy to arrange for the transfer of the refuge to the Service within the year. But while these agency officials support the creation of an official national wildlife refuge at Alameda, the process has been slowed by the question of contaminants on refuge lands and a debate about who will be responsible for cleaning them up.

GGAS staff and FAWR committee members continue to encourage the Service and the Navy to resolve the clean-up issues and move forward with transferring this special property to USFWS. FAWR is also working with USFWS biologists at the refuge to restore the site and monitor wildlife populations. Vigilance, tenacity and lots of patience

seem to be the required components to keep the dream moving forward.

The 2003 year has been very productive at Alameda's refuge. Howard Shippey, wildlife cinematographer, has taken 40-plus hours of footage, creating a wonderful archive of the refuge's natural resources for future editing. The film includes incredible Great Blue Heron and Avocet nesting behavior and much more. Paul Matzner from the Oakland Museum's Nature Sounds department and Dan Dugan, sound engineer, spent nearly nine hours on two days recording Least Tern vocalizations and other sounds at the refuge. Among research projects, there is an investigation of Least Tern prey fish, monitoring Least Tern breeding success, and at least monthly documentation of pelican and seal



FAWR has raised funds to install large warning signs for boaters at Alameda Wildlife Refuge.

Rachel Hurt

numbers using the breakwater in the evening.

FAWR Committee members continue to provide the lifeblood of GGAS' efforts to protect the refuge. Volunteers are conducting monthly work parties to keep Least Tern habitat suitable for nesting and clean up debris

REFUGE, continued on page 5

## Christmas Bird Counts

**Oakland: Sunday, December 14 • San Francisco: Tuesday, December 30**

**D**o you like getting out into the field to watch birds? Do you enjoy meeting other birders of various skill levels and learning about new areas to bird? Do you enjoy observing the birds visiting your backyard feeders? Do you enjoy eating a hot and hearty meal after a day in the field? Do you like to gather information on birds that will help protect habitat in our communities? If you answer yes to any of these questions, please join us for one or both of this year's Christmas Bird Counts!

Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS) will hold two Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), one in San Francisco and one in Oakland. Anyone can participate regardless of birding skill. Notices, with sign-up details, will be mailed in early November to all who have participated in the past five years. Anyone else wanting to participate should contact

the GGAS office at 510.843.2222 or [ggas@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:ggas@goldengateaudubon.org).

On a CBC, birders record as many species and individuals as possible in one day in a circle that covers a 15-mile diameter. The San Francisco CBC attempts to count all the birds from San Bruno to the Golden Gate. The Oakland CBC covers the area from Pt. Isabel to the Oakland Airport and from Treasure Island to Lafayette. We break into teams led by local experts to search fields, shorelines, suburbs, reservoirs and mountain trails for wintering birds. Others stay at home and count the birds coming to their bird feeder. After a day of birding, everyone gets together at the informal count dinner (good, wholesome and reasonably priced!). At the dinner, we tally the total species seen and each group shares stories of their bird sightings and adventures. Who has the funniest CBC

experience, who has the "best" bird or a new bird for their area, or who had the tastiest noon-time treats? Some groups of participants have been covering the same area for so many years it is as much a social event as a bird count. New participants enjoy meeting other birders and learning good locations to bird. Although we have fun, there is a serious side too. All the information we collect is submitted to the National Audubon Society and made available to researchers studying bird distribution and population trends. Some information is used by land managers and environmental activists to protect our local wildlife. We look forward to you joining our Christmas Bird Counts!

Alan Hopkins  
Compiler for the San Francisco CBC;  
Dave Quady and Bob Lewis  
Co-Compilers for the Oakland CBC

## Meet GGAS' New Grassroots Organizer

GGAS has a new volunteer who is working to coordinate our volunteer efforts and to expand opportunities for GGAS members to become more involved in our chapter's great diversity of volunteer activist programs.

Jenn Rosenberg, an environmental attorney who recently relocated to the Bay Area, is devoting two days a week to GGAS as our volunteer Grassroots Organizer. She currently is helping organize volunteers for the November 15<sup>th</sup> Save the Quail Restore-A-Thon and working to expand and streamline GGAS' volunteer programs, which range from environmental clean-ups and restoration to conservation committees, field trips, environmental education and more.

Jenn grew up in Oregon's Willamette Valley and is a graduate of Willamette University, where she majored in art with a focus on black and white photography. She moved to San Francisco from Boulder, Colorado after earning a law degree from the University of Denver. In Boulder, she worked with groups to advocate for the protection of Whooping Crane habitat along the Central Flyway and to protect prairie dogs in Colorado. Jenn also has a particular interest in marine conservation issues.

If you would like to become more involved in GGAS' volunteer activist programs, e-mail Jenn directly at [jrosenberg@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:jrosenberg@goldengateaudubon.org) or [ggas@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:ggas@goldengateaudubon.org).

Welcome Jenn!

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### AQUATIC PARK, continued from page 1

body weight during its migratory journey. It is essential for birds to build up their body fat during the winter months to prepare for spring and fall migrations and summer breeding season. Excessive disturbances can interfere with feeding and lead to death during migratory flight or failure to reproduce.

Every year, Berkeley's Aquatic Park provides a home to as many as 1,700 water birds at any one time during the migratory season. Isolated from the Bay yet connected by culverts, it is perhaps the only such body of water in the east central part of the Bay that provides relatively calm waters for waterbirds during high tides and storms, as well as roosting and feeding habitats at all times. For that reason, we believe it is one of the most important water bird habitats in the Bay and worthy of protection. The Berkeley City Council has already acted to protect this important habitat by prohibiting water skiing on the big lagoon during the waterfowl migratory season from September through April.

Recently, the Berkeley High School Women's Crew (BHCW) applied to the Berkeley Department of Parks and Recreation for a 10-year lease for crew practices in Aquatic Park. Previously, the crew team used

Lake Merritt for practice. The team's practice schedule, extending from September to May, coincides exactly with the time when water birds need the lagoon.

The Department of Parks and Recreation asked a wildlife consulting firm to analyze the potential impacts. The consultant's report concluded that the impacts could be significant:

During the practice periods, the crew boat activity will greatly reduce the amount of open water habitat available for open-water birds in Aquatic Park and the amount of time that they can spend feeding. Many will probably leave the main lagoon, and those that remain will be flushed to the edges, where they are subject to repeated disturbance by park users and dogs. Only a limited number of the birds that flush from the main lagoon could be supported by the adjacent, small basins and most would likely move to the Bay. As noted above, the repeated flushing of birds off the water and the reduction in feeding time would reduce the energy they have available for migration.

The addition of crew team practices at the park would result in an overall increase in the number of hours each day that boats are on the water. This would decrease the number of hours that birds are able to feed and rest on the main lagoon without being disturbed...

Based on the evidence of this report, GGAS has offered to work with the BHCW to find an alternative solution that works for both the birds and Berkeley High students. When we learned about this new threat to Aquatic Park, GGAS and the Sierra Club approached the parents of the BHCW, expressed our concern and offered to help them find a new location. With the help of Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, the Lake Merritt location seems once again to be viable for the crew team. The East Bay Regional Park District is building a new boating center on the Oakland Estuary, and that too may provide an alternate site. The Park District has expressed to us a willingness to house the crew.

We believe that the crew team has viable alternatives to Aquatic Park that have far fewer environmental impacts. We urge the team to work with us, the Sierra Club and the City of Berkeley in identifying and achieving the use of one of those alternatives. If the city of Berkeley decides to move forward on the lease, however, we will insist that they prepare a full Environmental Impact Report in order to identify the potential impacts, mitigations for those impacts and viable alternatives.

### How You Can Help

If you share our concern for the fate of the water birds of Aquatic Park, please write Mayor Tom Bates and the Berkeley City Council to express your concern. If you are a Berkeley resident, please write your Councilperson directly. The address is:

Mayor Tom Bates *or*  
Councilperson \_\_\_\_\_  
2180 Milvia Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Arthur Feinstein at the GGAS office at 510.843.6551.

By Arthur Feinstein  
Conservation/Education Director

# PROGRAMS

Anne McTavish



You won't want to miss either of the November membership programs. We meet socially at 7 p.m. Programs begins at 7:30 p.m. For more information about upcoming events or detailed directions to either location, please see our web page. You may also check for updates online at [www.goldengateaudubon.org/Chapter/programs2003-2004.htm](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org/Chapter/programs2003-2004.htm).

## San Francisco

San Francisco meetings are held in the County Fair building at Strybing Arboretum in Golden Gate Park, 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Lincoln Way. Directions are available online at [www.strybing.org/visiting/page2.html](http://www.strybing.org/visiting/page2.html).

### Friday, November 14

Ken Lajoie,

"The Origin of the San Francisco Bay:

Only 10,000 Years Old and Leaving Soon"

Ken Lajoie, geologist, recently retired from 30 years of service to the U. S. Geological Survey, and expert on episodic natural events, will speak. Just 10,000 years ago, near the end of the last ice age, sea level was about 350 feet lower than it is today and there was no bay. At that time, large camels, mammoths, mastodons, ground sloths and bison roamed the broad inland valleys now occupied by the bay. As continental glaciers

melted, the broad, low area in the Coast Ranges of Central California filled with water to form the bay. Probably within the next 2,000 years, the bay will drain away through the Golden Gate as sea level falls with the onset of the next ice age. The oldest archeological sites in the bay basin are about 5,000 years old, but it's quite likely that early peoples occupied Central California at least 15,000 years ago - before the bay existed.

## Berkeley

Berkeley meetings are held at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions are available at [www.northbrae.org/directions.html](http://www.northbrae.org/directions.html).

### Thursday, November 20

Dr. Richard Tenaza,

"Birds of East Africa"

Dr. Richard Tenaza, professor of biological sciences at the University of the Pacific, takes us on a journey through the savannas, mountains and Rift Valley lakes of East Africa in search of the bird life that dwells in these diverse landscapes. Having led over 20 trips to the region, Dr. Tenaza presents an instructive photographic exploration of over 200 species of birds—their behavior, their habitats, and the associated mammalian wildlife.

## Neotropical Birding Panama in March

We are pleased to offer an eight-day trip to Panama to experience the exuberant bird, animal and plant life of the isthmus bridging North and South America.

The first three nights will be at the Canopy Tower, a spectacular ecotourism lodge in Soberanía National Park, overlooking the Panama Canal and close to the best birding sites of Central Panama. From there the group will travel to the mountainous western region of Chiriquí. Our base in Chiriquí will be Villa Marita in Boquete, ideally located for exploring the highland cloud forests and coffee plantations, where we may see Resplendent Quetzal and Three-wattled Bellbird.

Our guide in Panama will be Rosabel Kaufmann, a skilled birding trip leader and a director of Panama Audubon Society. Some of our Panama Audubon Society friends will join us for a birding outing and for dinner on our last night in Panama.

We will fly to Panama from San Francisco on March 15, 2004, returning on March 22. The cost, including airfare, is \$2,600 per person, double occupancy. Participants of all levels of experience and interest are welcome.

For the detailed itinerary and trip application, please call trip leader Steve Margolin at 530.342.6476.

### REFUGE, continued from page 3

washed ashore during storms and high tides. Volunteers are developing FAWR's Web site and reaching out to the local Alameda community to connect them with this unique treasure and build awareness about the refuge campaign. Fundraising is also an important part of our work. Recently FAWR raised funds for large signs that have been installed to inform boaters of the appropriate and legal distance to keep from disturbing birds and seals using the breakwater.

This season for the endangered California Least Tern was remarkably long. We

observed the first nest on May 10, and the last youngster fledged on August 20. The final report is not yet available, but it is estimated that 179 chicks fledged (range: min. 104 and max. 253). The endangered Brown Pelican also returned to use the refuge: we had over 700 pelicans using the breakwater as their traditional night roost in early September—the highest September count in three years. Western gulls and many other resident birds also nested on the refuge this year, and Peregrine Falcons hunted on the property. Harbor Seals hauled out, and

late this last March, a very young seal pup was seen with an adult resting on the island breakwater. The Alameda Refuge is truly a unique place—and GGAS remains hopeful that we can win it the long-term protection it deserves.

## How You Can Help

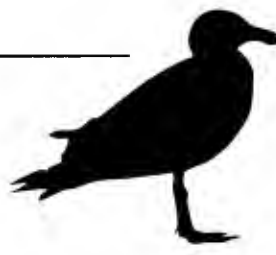
For more information on ways you can support FAWR's conservation and education efforts, visit [www.fawr.org](http://www.fawr.org) or call Leora Feeney at 510.522.8525.

by Leora Feeney



# FIELD TRIPS

Susan Groves



## Birding for Kids at Strybing Arboretum

*San Francisco*

**Saturdays, November 1 and December 6**

San Francisco Nature Education Leaders: Nancy DeStefanis, Angie Geiger, Scott Walker; Strybing Arboretum Docent: Darin Dawson

415.876.5220, myblueherons@yahoo.com

9–11 a.m. Meet at the front gate of the Arboretum for this regular first Saturday of the month bird and nature hike. For ages 7 and older. Details in *September Gull*.

## Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserves

*Monterey County*

**Saturday, November 1**

Leader: Rick Fournier, 831.632.2473, [www.montereybirdingadventures.com](http://www.montereybirdingadventures.com)

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserves Visitor Center. This is one of California's prime birding locations! Great trip for all levels of birders.

From the Bay Area take Hwy. 101 south from San Jose. After the town of San Martin and before Gilroy, exit west on Hwy. 152 going toward Watsonville. From Watsonville, take G12 (Salinas Rd.) south to Elkhorn Road to the Reserve's Visitor's Center. [\$]

## Strybing Arboretum

*San Francisco*

**Sunday, November 2 and December 7**

GGAS co-leaders: Allan Ridley, Rick Ferrick; Strybing Arboretum Docents: Linda Lyons, Helen McKenna. 415.566.3241

Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. Details in *September Gull*.



**Carpool.** If you can share a ride or if you need a ride, call Susan Groves at 510.654.5954.

[\$] **Entrance fee** required.

## Las Gallinas Sewer Ponds

*Marin*

**Saturday, November 15**

Leader: Hugh Cotter  
415.931.7736, [htcotter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:htcotter@sbcglobal.net)

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the parking lot for this half-day trip. We'll see a variety of water birds, raptors and more in migration. Beginners welcome.

Take 101 north and exit at Lucas Valley Drive. Go east on Smith Ranch Rd. to the end. Take a sharp left to the sewage treatment ponds, just before the county park. Drive past the headquarters to the parking lot on the left.

## Birding and Biking the Bay Trail

*Albany to Richmond*

**Saturday, November 15**

Leader: Jeffrey Black, 510.526.7068

Meet at 9:15 a.m. at the old Middle School at the corner of Jackson and Buchanan in Albany for this half day outing. We'll ride about 10-12 flat miles stopping to view wintering shorebirds and ducks along the Bay, in wetlands and estuaries. Suitable for beginners. Rain cancels. Please wear a helmet.

## Pt. Reyes National Seashore

*Marin County*

**Saturday, November 22**

Leader: Rusty Scalf  
510.666.9936, [rscalf@jps.net](mailto:rscalf@jps.net)

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Five Brooks Pond. We will also bird Olema Marsh, the Visitor's Center and Limantour. Bring a lunch and liquids (no distilled spirits, please.).

Five Brooks Pond is just south of Olema on Shoreline Hwy./Rte. 1. It is marked by a sign.

## Briones Regional Park

*Contra Costa County*

**Sunday, November 23**

Leader: Bob Lewis  
510.845.5001, [Rlewis0727@aol.com](mailto:Rlewis0727@aol.com)

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Bear Valley Rd. entrance to the park. First parking lot inside the park. We'll look for winter birds. Half day trip.

From Orinda, go north on Camino Pablo. Turn right on Bear Creek Rd. 4.5 miles, then right again into the park.

[\$] East Bay Drivers/riders meet at 7:30 at Rockridge BART station.

## Wednesdays At The Marsh

*Arrowhead Marsh, Alameda County*

**Wednesday, November 26**

Leader: Courtenay Peddle, 510.532.8911  
(no calls after 9 p.m.), [capeddle@there.net](mailto:capeddle@there.net)

Meet at 9:30 a.m. for a 2 1/2 hour stroll. We should see lots of shorebirds and perhaps Clapper Rail. Bring scope if you have one. All levels of birders welcome.

Take I-880 south to Hegenberger and then west on Hegenberger to Doolittle Drive. Right on Doolittle, right onto Swan Way. Left into MLK park. Drive to end for Arrowhead Marsh parking lot.

## Coyote Hills Regional Park

*Fremont*

**Saturday, November 29**

Leader: Anne Hoff  
510.845.5908, [Anne2210B@cs.com](mailto:Anne2210B@cs.com)

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Visitor Center parking lot. Coyote Hills is a unique park with fresh water marsh and salt pond habitat. We should see ducks, shorebirds, wintering songbirds, raptors. Bring lunch and liquids. Beginners welcome. Heavy rain cancels.

From the East Bay take I-880 south to Rt. 84/ Dumbarton Bridge exit. Turn right and continue west. Exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile, left on Patterson Ranch Rd. to Coyote Hills. [\$]

## Aquatic Park

*San Francisco*

**Sunday, November 30**

Leader: SF Maritime National Historical Park Ranger Carol Kiser  
415.561.7100 or 561.7104

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the foot of the Hyde Street Pier (Hyde & Jefferson) for this beginners bird walk. Discover birds next door to the urban environment. Approximately two hour walk. Dress in layers. Trip is wheelchair accessible.

## Gray Lodge & Sacramento Wildlife Refuges

Sutter, Butte and Glenn Counties

**Saturday and Sunday, December 13 & 14**

Leaders: Steve and Renee Margolin  
530.342.6476

We will be looking for wintering geese (four species), Tundra Swans, a variety of ducks, raptors and Sandhill Cranes. For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. in lot #14 at Gray Lodge. We will caravan through Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, and then visit some other sites in Sutter, Butte and Glenn Counties so make sure you have plenty of gasoline before arriving at Gray Lodge. There is no lodge in Gray Lodge. Bring lunch, snacks, liquids, scopes and clothes appropriate for the Sacramento Valley in December (cold, with wind and rain always possible). Heavy rain cancels trip. You may join us for both days or just one day.

Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to Route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on Route 99 to the town of Gridley. Turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy and continue five miles to Pennington Rd. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge. Proceed through the checking station and continue to parking lot #14.  
[\$]

On Sunday, we will meet at 9 a.m. in the visitors' parking lot at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge.

To get there from I-5 take the Princeton exit just north of the Glenn Co. line, and follow signs to the Refuge. Or, take #99 to Live Oak (just south of Gridley). In Live Oak, go west on Pennington Rd. and follow it west and then north to the Gray Lodge entrance. Allow two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. For accommodations, try the Blue Gum Willows Motel or the Best Western in Willows, or Jean's Riverside B & B in Oroville.  
[\$]

Call Susan Groves, Field Trips Committee Chair, at 510.654.5954:

- if you have difficulty reaching a leader and need information,
- if you have suggestions for trips, or
- if you are interested in leading a trip

## GGAS Gift Memberships

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Membership (\$20) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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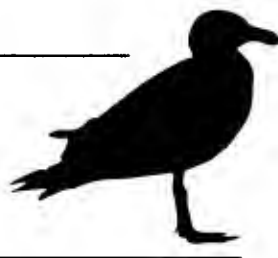
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**Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702**

# OBSERVATIONS

September 1–30, 2003  
Bruce Mast



**S**eptember means fall migration, and this past month lived up to expectations. In the interest of column space, we'll dive right in to the species reports.

## Loons to Ducks

A Sept 21 Bodega Bay, SON, pelagic trip (SON) produced 2 Flesh-footed Shearwaters, up to 100 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 10-plus Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels, and a few Black and Least Storm-Petrels (RS; mob). An Ashy Storm-Petrel was seen cruising off Coyote Pt, SM, on Sept 28 and 29 (PJ; ADM). A Red-tailed Tropicbird circled the Farallon Islands on Sept 29th (PP). Two Least Bitterns were reported at Coyote Hills RP, ALA, on Sept 20 (JL).

## Raptors to Alcids

Along with typical hawk migrants, returning Prairie Falcons, Ferruginous Hawks, and the occasional south-bound Swainson's, 4 Broad-winged Hawks passed Hawk Hill (MRN) on the 27th (JM) and another soared over Bolinas Lagoon (MRN) the next day (KH). From Sept 19th to the 27th, 2 American Golden-Plovers were a regular highlight on Abbott's Lagoon trip reports (NW; mob). A Solitary Sandpiper turned up at the Mendoza ("B") Ranch (PRNS, MRN) Sept 4-9 (JW; RS, DWN). Meanwhile, on Sept 1-6, 2 **Hudsonian Godwits** (*Limosa haemastica*) were photographed in New Chicago Marsh, Alviso, SCL (DMI; mob). A Semipalmated Sandpiper visited Abbott's Lagoon (PRNS, MRN) on Sept 5th (RS) and 14th (RH). Abbott's Lagoon also hosted Baird's Sandpiper throughout the month (JW; mob). Additional Baird's reports came in from Moss Beach, MRN, (DB, PB) and Limantour Beach, PRNS, MRN (JR).

Two Pectoral Sandpipers were regulars at Abbott's Lagoon and at nearby "I" Ranch Sept 4-25 (JW; mob). Pectorals showed up sporadically at Mendoza ("B") Ranch ponds (DWN); Carmondy Rd ponds, SON, (DAs; CDL); Redwood Shores, SM (RT; RF, KO, KR); Limantour Beach, PRNS, MRN, (JR) and Stafford L, MRN (KH). A Sharp-tailed

Sandpiper dropped in at Abbott's Lagoon on Sept 4 and stayed 2 days (JW; RH, BF, RS). A Stilt Sandpiper was observed in the New Chicago Marsh, Alviso, SCL on Sept 1 and refound on the 18th (BoR; DaW). A Stilt joined the company of Red Knots at Abbott's Lagoon (PRNS, MRN) on the 12th, 13th, and 25th (DR; PLT, LH) and another visited Bodega Bay, SON, on the 20th (LoC).

Continuing the shorebird hit parade at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, a Reeve spent the 10th on the western shore (RS). Red Phalaropes visited the lagoon on the 17th, 24th, and 25th (BB; ES, KH). Between Sept 11th and 29th a Pomarine and 3 Parasitic Jaegers cruised past Coyote Pt and Redwood Shores, SM (RT, ADM). Abandoning its off-shore migration route, a Sabine's Gull lingered at Año Nuevo SR, SM, through Sept 6th (PM; RT, DB, PB, DaW). Two more Sabine's spent 2 days off Coyote Pt., SM, on the 29th and 30th (ADM; RT).

Common Terns joined roosting Elegant and Forster's Terns near Coyote Pt Yacht Club, SM on Sept 3rd, 12th, and 13th (RT; KO). Commons also stopped at the Sunnyvale sewage ponds, SCL (MiR); at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN (RH); below the Golden Gate Bridge, SF (JC); and at Redwood Shores, SM (RT). Birders at the Sunnyvale sewage ponds, SCL, on Sept. 6 were also treated to a pair of Black Terns (MiR).

## Doves to Thrashers

On Sept 4, a White-winged Dove arrived as far west as the Farallons, SF (PP). On the 11th, separate birds were found at the PRNS Lighthouse and at the Nunes ("A") Ranch (RS). Two weeks later, a White-winged was reported frequenting a bird feeder at Muir Beach, MRN (JW). The sole sighting outside of MRN was on the 27th at Hayward RS, ALA (BR).

The Marin Headlands hawkwatch spotted 3 Black Swift fly-overs on Sept 8 (TB, MWE). Three more were reported from the Farallons, SF, on Sept 26th (PP). Chimney Swifts were also reported from the Farallons

on the 15th and 26th (PP). A regular observer atop Mount Davidson, SF, turned up a Black-chinned Hummingbird on Sept 12 (PS). A Costa's Hummingbird showed up at Stinson Beach, MRN, on the 21st and 22nd (KH). Another Costa's has been visiting a Novato, MRN, hummingbird feeder since July (KB).

Along the MRN coast, a Lewis's Woodpecker was seen on Sept 11th, flying over the New Willows, PRNS (DWN), the beginning of an apparent Lewis's irruption. Through the remainder of the month, Lewis's were spotted at the RCA Station, PRNS (DR); Moss Beach, SM (ADM); 2 birds at Coyote Pt Museum, SM (RT; AE); Foster City, SM (RT); 2 birds at Rockville Park, Fairfield, SOL (RS); 7 birds near Martinez, CC (DW, SG); and 18 birds at Inspiration Pt, Tilden Park, CC (SG).

In addition to regular Willow Flycatcher reports, Least Flycatchers were identified at the Nunes Ranch ("A"), PRNS, MRN, on Sept 7 (RS) and at the Farallons, SF, on the 26th (PP). A single Hammond's Flycatcher was observed at the New Willows, PRNS, MRN, on Sept 27th (RS). A Gray Flycatcher stopped in at Mount Davidson, SF, on Sept 12 (PS; CDL). An Eastern Kingbird lingered near Moss Beach, SM, Sept 25-29 (RT; mob). Both Philadelphia and Red-eyed Vireos were listed in a Sept 4th report from the Farallons, SF (PP). In addition to numerous shorebirds, Abbott's Lagoon hosted a **Sedge Wren** (*Cistothorus platensis*) on Sept 26th (KA). A Wrentit with wanderlust turned up in the blackberries near Ft. Mason, SF, on Sept 25th (MZ). A Gray Catbird wandered over to Bayview Hill, SF, on Sept 20 and stayed 3 days (PMC; mob). Finally, a Sage Thrasher went looking for sage in Bolinas, MRN, on Sept 24th (TG) and on the Farallons on the 26th (PP).

## Wood Warblers to Finches

The first Red-throated Pipit report came in on Sept 21st from the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN (KG; CC). Up to 8 Red-throateds were seen at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Sept 23-28 (RS; mob). Three also crossed the waves to the Farallons, SF, on the 26th (PP). The same day, a Phainopepla forsook the arroyos to look for mistletoe in the Presidio, SF, (anon.; MZ).

Observers tallied 18 vagrant warbler species, in addition to the typical western



species. The most remarkable had to be the **Connecticut Warbler** (*Oporornis agilis*), reported from the Farallons, SF, on Sept 26th (PP). Along with the numerous warblers at Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN, observers found a Summer Tanager on Sept 11th (RS) and a Green-tailed Towhee Sept 25-27 (KH; mob). On the 5th, a Green-tailed Towhee also showed up at Ft. Miley, SF (HC; PS).

Clay-colored Sparrows turned up at a number of locations: at the Farallons, SF, (PP); at the Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN, (RS); in Martinez, CC, (DW; JuC); at Hayward RS, ALA, (BR); in GGP, SF, (KrH; BF); and in Half Moon Bay, SM, (RT). Brewer's were reported from the Farallons, SF, on Sept 4 and 27th (PP). Additional Brewer's locales included Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN, (RS); South SF, SM, (RT); in a Montara, SM, yard (AJ); at Hayward RS, ALA, (ES; JL, SJ); and at Pigeon Pt Lighthouse, SM, (RT).

Observers found 3 Vesper Sparrows: two from the PRNS Lighthouse, MRN, on Sept 3rd (RS) and 28th (MS) and the 3rd from a Montara, SM, yard on Sept 30th (AJ). A Black-throated Sparrow was found at the Farallons, SF, on Sept 27th (PP). By far the most exciting sparrow was a **Baird's Sparrow** (*Ammodramus bairdii*), found Sept 28th on the Farallons, SF (PP). According to Small (1994), there are only 4 previous California records of this species, including 1969 and 1991 records from the Farallons.

Indigo Buntings turned up in 3 locations on Sept 4th and 5th: at the Farallons, SF (PP); atop Mt. Davidson, SF (PS); and at the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN (RS). The most remarkable bunting of the month was a **Painted Bunting** (*Passcrina ciris*), seen Sept 15th at the Farallons, SF (PP). Migrant watchers at the New Willows, PRNS, MRN, were treated to a Dieckissel on Sept 6th and 7th (mob). Those same 2 days, a Bobolink was at nearby Abbott's lagoon (JM; RS). Three more Bobolinks made landfall on the Farallons, SF, on the 27th (PP).

An Orchard Oriole spent Sept 19-21 in Lincoln Park, SF (DeM; AH). On Sept 27th, 2 more Orchards touched down on the Farallons (PP). We conclude this month's installment with a Sept 29th report of a black-backed Lesser Goldfinch. This subspecies apparently came from Texas to sample the California cuisine at a San Rafael, MRN, feeder (MJR).

## Wood Warbler Sightings

### Tennessee Warbler

9/15,16	Middle L, GGP, SF	JC; GD
9/24	Montara Flower Fields, SM	AJ
9/25	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	KH
9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/27-29	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	mob
9/28	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	ST

### Virginia's Warbler

9/4	Farallons, SF	PP
9/12	Mt Davidson, SF	BF

### Lucy's Warbler

9/6	New Willows, PRNS, MRN	mob
9/15	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JM

### Northern Parula

9/1	McLaren Park, SF	KMK
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### Chestnut-sided Warbler

9/4	Farallons, SF	PP
9/6-7	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	LF, DB, PB, RS
9/11	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	RS
9/11	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	DWN
9/20-26	L Merced, SF	AH; BH, BF
9/27	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	RS, CC, DA, MWE
9/27	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	RS, DA,
9/25-29	Pilarcitos Creek, SM	RT; ADM

### Magnolia Warbler

9/3-5	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	RH; RS
9/4, 26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/5-7	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	mob
9/11	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	RS
9/25	Merrie Way, SF	GD

### Cape May Warbler

9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/27-29	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	mob

### Black-throated Blue Warbler

9/20	Owl Cyn, Bodega Bay, SON	RR
9/27	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	RS

### Blackburnian Warbler

9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
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### Prairie Warbler

9/6-9	Upper New Willows, PRNS, MRN	mob
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### Palm Warbler

9/24	Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN	ES
9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/28	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	MS

### Bay-breasted Warbler

9/27-29	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	mob
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### Blackpoll Warbler

9/3-7	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	mob
9/4,15,26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/5	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	BF
9/15	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JM
9/15	Coyote Hills RP, ALA	JMS
9/16,17	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JR, BB
9/21	Hayward RS, ALA	JL, BR
9/21	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	KG; CC
9/21	Rodeo Lagoon, MRN	BL
9/25	Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Moss Beach, SM	RT
9/25-29	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	KH; mob
9/27,28	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	DA, MWE, ST
9/27,28	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	RS, DA, MWE, ST
9/28,29	Drake's Beach, PRNS, MRN	ST; mob

### Black-and-white Warbler

9/15	Pilarcitos Creek, SM	RT
9/23, 27	Owl Cyn, Bodega Bay, SON	DH; mob
9/21	Muir Beach, MRN	DMK
9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/28	Rockville Park, Fairfield, SOL	RS

### American Redstart

9/4,15,26	Farallons, SF	PP
9/4-6	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JW; RS, ST
9/5,6	Fish Docks	RS; ST
9/6	Campbell Cove, SON	DN
9/6	Bodega Bay Marine Lab, SON	DN
9/7	Mt Davidson, SF	PS
9/27	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	RS, CC, DA, MWE
9/28	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	ST

### Ovenbird

9/15	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	JM
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### Northern Waterthrush

9/2	Stevens Creek, Mountain View, SCL	MiR
9/12	Jewel L, Tilden Park, CC	ES

### Kentucky Warbler

9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
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### Connecticut Warbler

9/26	Farallons, SF	PP
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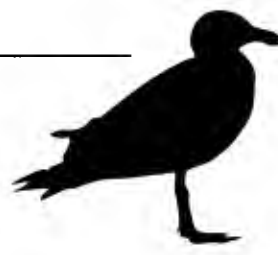
**Abbreviations for Observers:** DA, David Armstrong; DAs, Dick Ashford; KA, Ken Archibald; BB, Bob Battagin; DB, Dennis Braddy; KB, Ken Burton; MB, Matt Brady; PB, Patricia Braddy; TB, Tim Behr; CC, Chris Conard; HC, Hugh Cotter; JC, Josiah Clark; JuC, Judi Cooper; LC, Les Chibana; LoC, Lori Conrad; NC, Nick Cleland; ADM, Al DeMartini; GD, Gary Deghi; JD, Jim Danzenbaker; AE, Al Eisner; MWE, Mark Eaton; BF, Brian Fitch; HF, Harry Fuller; LF, Leslie Flanche; MF, Mike Feighner; RF, Rich Ferrick; KG, Kevin Guse; SG, Steve Glover; TG, Tom Gradely; AH, Alan Hopkins; BH, Bob Hall; DH, David Hofmann; KH, Keith Hansen; KrH, Kristi Hein; LH, Lisa Hug; RH, Roger Harshaw; SH, Steve Huckabone; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; PJ, Paul Jones; SJ, Sheila Junge; BL, Bill Legge; CL, Cindy Lieurance; CDL, Calvin Lou; DL, Don Lewis; JL, John Luther; LL, Les Lieurance; PLT, Peter LaTourrette; RL, Robin Leong; DM, Dan Murphy; DMI, David McIntyre; DMK, David McKenzie; DeM, Dennis Meehan; JM, Joe Morlan; KMK, Kevin McKereghan; PM, Peter Metropulos; PMC, Pat McCullough; DN, Dan Nelson; DWN, David Nelson; KO, Kris Olson; CP, Courtenay Peddle; BP, Bob Power; JP, John Poole; PP, Peter Pyle; BR, Bob Richmond; BoR, Bob Reiling; DR, Don Reinberg; JR, Jean Richmond; JaR, James Restivo; KR, Kathy Robertson; MR, Mark Rauzon; MJR, Mary Jo Rippon; MiR, Mike Rogers; RR, Ruth Rudesill; DS, David Suddjian; DSi, Dan Singer; ES, Emilie Strauss; JMS, Jean-Marie Spoelman; MS, Michael Stevenson; PS, Paul Saraceni; RS, Rich Stallcup; RoS, Roberta Seals; RuS, Rusty Scalf; RT, Ron Thorn; RyT, Ryan Terrill; ST, Scott Terrill; MU, Myra Ullvang; DVP, David Vander Pluym; AW, Alan Wight; DW, Denise Wight; DaW, Dave Weber; JW, Jim White; NW, Natalie White; MZ, Matt Zlatunich

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listers; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions.

**Abbreviations for Counties and Others:** ALA, Alameda; BBA, Breeding Bird Atlas; CBC, Christmas Bird Count; CC, Contra Costa; Cr, Creek; Cyn, Canyon; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L, Lake; MRN, Marin; MTY, Monterey; N., North; NAP, Napa; Pt, Point; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; Rd, Road; Res, Reservoir; RS, Regional Shoreline; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve

# BACKYARD BIRDER

Meg Pauletich



**W**hy do we have so many crows all of a sudden?" my birding and non-birding friends ask me. Since I have been doing the annual Audubon Christmas Count in Orinda for over 25 years, I, too, have noticed the emergence of a larger number of American Crows along with their cousins, the Common Ravens. I remember Nancy Conzett, a former *Gull* editor who led our count for several years, saying she dreaded standing up at the count dinner imitating a raven's call. We had seen one on our count and a raven was so seldom seen that it needed all sorts of verification, including its call!

There are probably many factors at work in the spread of American Crows into urban areas. In California they have been concentrated in the Central Valley, where they drove farmers to desperate measures as they raided crops. Urban sprawl has moved closer to these farmlands and even replaced many acres. Since members of the crow family are omnivorous (they will eat virtually anything except green plants), it stands to reason that they can be quite fulfilled in concert with people. And since they travel in flocks, they share the bounty with their family members, which ensures success in rearing their young. In urban settings they certainly have fewer enemies, such as farmers with big guns or hawks. In fact, they roost in huge numbers, creating enough droppings and noise to be labeled pests. Some areas in the world even have crow shoots!

The crow genus, *Corvus*, includes crows, ravens, magpies, jays and nutcrackers. The crow family in North America consists of five species of crow (the sixth is the Mexican Crow, which often appears near the border) and two ravens, the Common Raven and the Chihuahuan Raven. The most northern populations of crows migrate south in winter, while other populations exist year-round in their home territories. Some populations of crows breed cooperatively. This means that previous years' broods will help raise their younger siblings, even staying on when they



American Crow, San Bruno Mountain.

Lee Kamey

become reproductively mature at 1 to 2 years of age. Other flocks are not so family-oriented, an interesting topic for further scientific study.

Crows have a reputation for being "intelligent," at least as far as that applies to other "bird brains." Many tales persist regarding their cleverness in recognizing hunting decoys, avoiding them and knowing hunters' intents. Experimenters have found that crows learn "tricks" based on reinforcement more quickly and easily than other birds. Here's one example: the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a brave man who has banded

American Crow nestlings for years. This flock of American Crows actually recognizes this chap's car and announces his presence to the flock by flying in circles and making a tremendous noise. They mob him in groups of 75 to 100 as he climbs a tree to "borrow" a brood for measuring and banding. He deserves hazard pay!

Crow calls are guttural and harsh for songbirds, but individuals have a wide repertoire of calls. In captivity they have been found to be excellent mimics of the human voice and other sounds. Strangely, they rarely exhibit this in the wild. They are also amazing flyers, among the best at avian aerobatics. They seem to enjoy the art of tumbling in the air immensely.

Possibly the biggest threat to American Crow populations is West Nile virus. The illness strikes them hard and fast, so they are a good indicator species for areas likely to be hot spots for the virus. This is something biologists in California will be looking at in the coming years as West Nile virus spreads our way.

Whether you are a fan of American Crows or not, there is something to be admired in their depth of "personality," their joie de vivre, their cleverness and their ability to co-exist with humans when many other species cannot. Along with the ubiquitous cockroach, crows and other members of their genus will probably be among the last survivors on earth!

## Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education and birding activities!

### Golden Eagle (\$1000 and more)

Kevin & Susan Consey (stock donation for Bay-Delta Litigation and general operating fund), Arthur Feinstein & Ruth Vose (Bay-Delta Litigation)

### Peregrine Falcon (\$500 to \$1000)

Harold C. Kirker, John Luther (Bay-Delta Litigation)

### Least Tern (\$200 to \$500)

Jean A. Lucken

### Clapper Rail (\$100 to \$200)

Kim & Kazumi Cranney\*, Elin Hansen, Dorothy Kakimoto, Steven Lanum, Marilyn Nasatir

### Gifts (to \$100)

Andrea L. Auer, David Baker (FAWR), Susanna Bensinger, Joelle Buffa, Dr. Richard Cooper\*, Dana Gardner\*, Gerald & Madelon Halpern\* (Bird Box),

Robert & Patricia Jacobs\*, Roger James, Elizabeth W. King\*, Sterling Kinnell\*, Robert Lewis, Frank & Sally Lopez\*, Eileen C. Odegaard\*, Anita Pereira\*, Cora Pitcock, Richard & Janet Rosefield (FAWR), Joe Soave\*, John & Jo Sudall, Emilie Strauss\* (Conservation), Tom & Joyce Turowski\*, Chrystal L. Walsh, Florine I. Williamson\*, Ellen F. Yamamoto, Vera Ann Yoshii

### In Memory of

Donald L. Dahlsten: Paula Kane Kleintjes

### In-Kind

Frank & Janice Delfino: T-Shirts for which recipients made a FAWR donation

Connie Diernisse: Five field guides

Eugene & Akiko Makishima: 12 volumes of major bird handbooks and references

John & Jo Sudall: The Audubon Folio of 30 bird paintings, plus three bird books

### Grant

Sierra Club's San Francisco Bay Chapter: \$3,000 for Save Gateway Valley

\* With GGAS Supporting Membership

# Save the Date to Save the Quail



Once numerous in San Francisco's parks, the charismatic California Quail is now on the verge of extinction in the City. But you can help. Join Golden Gate Audubon Society's Save the Quail campaign and help us restore healthy California Quail populations in San Francisco.

On Saturday, November 15, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., GGAS will hold the first-ever Save the Quail "Restore-A-Thon" in San Francisco. Unlike other "thons" where people walk, run, bike, or count birds, Save the Quail Restore-A-Thon participants will create quail habitat around the newly renovated Harding Park golf course and in the Presidio and help to raise funds for Golden Gate Audubon Society's Save the Quail campaign. All funds raised will be used to support GGAS' Save the Quail campaign, which includes direct habitat restoration efforts, outreach, education and advocacy to restore quail in San Francisco, and other conservation efforts, such as the initiation of a captive-breeding program.

Volunteers will work in two sites. At Harding Park Golf Course, our brand-new quail habitat restoration site, you'll be digging, planting and watering quail-friendly plants around the golf course. At the Presidio, volunteers will work in or near the current GGAS restoration site at

Quail Commons, on the fairly strenuous tasks of removing ice plant and other weeds. Volunteers will also find less strenuous tasks at both sites.

You don't need to be an expert birder or have a green thumb to join the Restore-A-Thon. People of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Tasks will vary from light to vigorous, including weeding, planting, watering and assisting GGAS staff with restoration and education efforts. At the end of the day, everyone will enjoy food, prizes, and relaxing in good company.

## Other Ways to Help

No time to volunteer? Show your appreciation and support of the GGAS Save the Quail campaign by sponsoring a Restore-A-Thon volunteer! Every dollar means a greater chance for the survival of the California Quail in San Francisco. Or contact the GGAS office to find out other ways to volunteer or support Golden Gate Audubon Society.

## Save the Quail Restore-A-Thon

**Saturday, November 15, 2003**

**9 am to 1 pm**

- ☐ **Yes!** I will help save San Francisco's quail by participating in the Restore-A-Thon.
  - ☐ I can work \_\_\_\_\_ hours (maximum 4 hours).
  - ☐ I have raised pledges in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour of work (suggested minimum pledge rate: \$ 5-10 per hour).
  - ☐ I will sponsor myself at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour or \$ \_\_\_\_\_ flat rate.
    - ☐ I would like to join a work party at:
      - ☐ Harding Park
      - ☐ The Presidio
      - ☐ Please choose a site for me.
  - ☐ I would like to sponsor a Restore-A-Thon team member.
    - ☐ Please choose a volunteer for me @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour for 4 hours.
    - ☐ I will sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour for 4 hours.

FIRST NAMELAST NAME
  - ☐ I can't participate in the Restore-A-Thon but want to help! Enclosed is a check to **Golden Gate Audubon Society** for \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ I want to join Golden Gate Audubon Society's conservation team and help save other Bay Area wildlife. Please send me information about how I can volunteer.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_



Mail to:

**Golden Gate Audubon Society**  
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G  
Berkeley, CA 94702

**PLEASE RETURN BY NOVEMBER 12**  
**OR CALL GGAS TO SIGN UP AT 510.843.2222.**

San Francisco Nature Education, formerly known as the Stow Lake Education Project, began three years ago with the strong support of Golden Gate Audubon Society. The program started with introducing students to the Great Blue Heron colony in Golden Gate Park. Soon teachers from all over the City clamored for expanded offerings.

SFNE responded with a full-year interactive environmental program that focuses on third- and fourth-graders from underserved schools and uses Golden Gate Park's Arboretum and Stow Lake as natural classrooms.

"Teach a child to love nature, because adults take care of the things they love." Mrs. Terwilliger (now 94) spoke these words many years ago—and SFNE agrees. Approximately 2,000 students have participated in classroom visits and field trips.

During classroom visits, children get up close and personal with the beaks, bones, wings and nests of local birds. Children learn

bird calls by listening to a new teaching device called the Bird Song Identifier. Each child receives a field journal, designed by SFNE advisor Jack Laws and with color illustrations by GGAS member Siovahn Ruck. The children color in the local birds, use the checklist and sketch and make field notes.

In the field, children are grouped in "clutches," small groups of six or eight, each accompanied by an experienced naturalist for the two-hour hike. Using binoculars and spotting scopes donated by Eagle Optics and field guide laminated cards provided by Local Birds Inc., the children delight in seeing Anna's hummingbirds, Brown Creepers and Red-winged Blackbirds flashing their epaulets. Their excitement is palpable.

A parent chaperone wrote of SFNE's program, "Many San Francisco children have never even been to Golden Gate Park, and your program gives them the opportunity to learn, observe and listen, and understand a

big part of their world. It is amazing to watch my daughter stop and listen to a bird call, identify said bird and go on to talk about nesting and other habits of local bird species."

In May, as we observed the Great Blue Heron chicks branch-hopping at Stow Lake for our final trip of the year, a nine year old from Sunnyside said, "This is the best day of my life." I felt the same way.

### How You Can Help

SFNE is grateful to Golden Gate Audubon Society for continuing to serve as our fiscal agent and sponsoring many of our programs. SFNE always needs volunteers for the third- and fourth-grade classroom visits and field trips. For more information, visit [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org), write [info@sfnature.org](mailto:info@sfnature.org), or phone 415.387.9160.

by Nancy DeStefanis  
Founder and Director, SFNE

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

*The GULL* is the official newsletter of Golden Gate Audubon Society. As a supporting member of GGAS, you receive a subscription to *The GULL*, a 10 percent discount on all items purchased at our nature store, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Local members of the National Audubon Society automatically receive *The GULL*. Not a GGAS member yet? Contact our office at 510.843.2222 for details.

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